

# LAMBTON KENT DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

## PARENT INVOLVEMENT COMMITTEE

January 11, 2010

Sarnia and Chatham Education Centres (Video Conference)

**Present:** Joy Badder, Superintendent of Education; Carmen McGregor, Chair; Jane Bryce, Vice-Chair; Tracey Machan, King George (S); Marian Redford, Gregory Drive; Wende Badder, John McGregor S.S.; Charlene Parks, Indian Creek; Kathy Gabriel, Lansdowne; Lynn LeFaive, P. E. McGibbon; Heather Simpson, Ridgetown Public School; Verna Ferencik, Tilbury District H.S.

**Regrets:** Gayle Stucke, Director of Education; Steve McNamara, Colonel Cameron; Tim Houle, North Lambton S.S.; Judy Krall, Lambton Central Collegiate V.I.

### Welcome – Tracey Machan

- Tracey welcomed everyone to the meeting.
- Superintendent of Education, Joy Badder attended the meeting on behalf of Director, Gayle Stucke who was attending a Dawn-Euphemia School Council meeting.
- Chair, Carmen McGregor introduced Vice-Chair, Jane Bryce to the new members of PIC.

### Business Arising from the Meeting of November 9, 2009

- The John McGregor S.S. School Council had asked that consideration be given when scheduling the examination days in June to take into account the tight timelines for graduation ceremonies. Clarification was requested as why the school year is not ending earlier when students returned to school early this year. Superintendent Badder explained that when the school year calendar is developed, ten days are set aside for secondary exams. Typically five days are scheduled in January and five days in June. Requests have been made to schedule four days in January and six at the end of June; however the extra day is needed in January should examinations need to be rescheduled in the event of inclement weather. As this has been the case in past years, the extra day is needed in January to allow some flexibility. It was noted that school boards that started school after Labour Day in 2009 will be required to have students attend school up until June 30 whereas our last day of school for students will be June 25.
- At the last meeting it was suggested that an approval process be established for PIC members attending regional workshops which should include a selection process and parameters for the payment of mileage and expenses. It was felt that the driver of the carpool would receive the full mileage payment while others driving on their own would receive the flat rate. It was recommended that the content of individual workshops be considered as part of the approval process (i.e. elementary or secondary focus). **PIC members supported the development of a protocol and that the issue will be further discussed at the February 8 meeting.**
- **A summary from the networking sessions held at the October 24 workshop was distributed. A copy of the summary will be sent to Principals to share with School Council Chairs.**

### Proposed 2010-2011 School Year Calendar

- Superintendent Badder reviewed the consultation process and annual timelines for approval of the school year calendar.
- Boards are legislated to have 194 instructional days. Last year we were short two days between Labour Day and the end of June necessitating the early start. This year we will be short one day. Consultation with the coterminous boards and with the unions began early December. Recommendations have been proposed to schedule one PA Day the week prior to the Labour Day weekend so students would not have to start school prior to Labour Day.
- Calendars are to be submitted to the Ministry of Education by May 1.

### Sharing Best Practices

- Charlene Parks shared information on the very successful volunteer program in place at Indian Creek Road P.S. Indian Creek is a large school with many parent volunteers.
- Parents at the school volunteer in many ways that include fundraising, field trips, assisting with hot lunch days and providing classroom support to students. Charlene spoke to her very rewarding experience as a volunteer working in the classroom. It was noted that not all teachers are supportive of parent volunteers in the classroom.
- Volunteers are required to provide Criminal Background Checks.
- Wende Badder will speak to the student initiated newspaper at John McGregor S.S. at the next meeting. The newspaper can be viewed on the school's website.

### Director's Update – Joy Badder

#### Early Learning Program

- Premier, Dalton McGuinty is coming to Victor Lauriston School on January 12 to make the provincial announcement regarding the full-time Early Learning Program. The Board is expected to have 19 full-time learning classes being offered at 8 schools in the district beginning September 2010. After the official announcement is made, the names of schools identified for the first year phase in will be made public.
- Boards in the province were required to identify possible schools for consideration for the year one and two phase in. Criteria for phase one schools included the availability of space within the school as there will be no capital funding provided this year for additions or to retrofit classrooms; and that sites identified would have minimal impact on the current licensed daycare providers operating in buildings. This was challenging as the Board operates a number of Best Start wrap-around and hub sites in many schools. Board staff worked with representatives from the St. Clair Catholic District School Board and with the Municipalities to identify sites.
- These schools will offer a full-time JK/SK blend. ECE workers will be hired for each Early Learning site to work with the classroom teacher. The average may be 26 students with a 13:1 pupil to adult ratio. This will be outside of the Board's JK to Gr. 3 primary class size average. Parents at the approved sites will only have the choice of the full-time program. If a site does not have 26 students within their area, the school can accept out-of-boundary students; however approval will be required on an annual basis.
- Before and after school care will be offered at these sites in the classroom by the ECE worker who will be an employee of the Board. The children will not be required to do any transitioning or movement between rooms. We will have an opportunity as a Board to provide before and after daycare for students ages 6 to 12. Licensed daycare providers will be contracted to provide this service. Parents will be eligible to apply for subsidy for before and after care as they would now for daycare service. Before and after school programs will be determined based on the needs of the community.

- Superintendent Badder responded to questions. The Board will receive funding based on the number of pupil spaces which is based on total enrolment as a district. ECE workers will be hired through the Board and will be members of CUPE. A posting and interview process will take place. The number of approved sites for year two of the phase in will be significantly lower as the Ministry will need to provide capital funding to boards for construction work and upgrades. Implementation of the Early Learning Program will be a five year phase in at which time full-time JK/SK programs will be offered at all schools. The selection of sites this year did not include schools offering French Immersion as the Board is in the process of a French Immersion Review. Schools with full Best Start hubs were also not considered due to the impact on daycare providers.
- The first regional meeting regarding implementation of the Early Learning Program is scheduled on January 18. Daycares are introducing the ELECT program this year. Based on Dr. Charles Pascal's recommendation to the Ministry the program is being blended with the Kindergarten document to accommodate the needs of full time JK/SK students. The before and after care program will be an extension of this as well. Participation in JK and SK is optional. It will be the parent's choice.

### French Immersion Review

- A French Immersion Review Committee was struck in September. The Committee was made up of three Trustees, the Superintendent of Education – Elementary Program, the System Coordinators of Student Achievement Elementary and Secondary, Program Consultants, Elementary and Secondary Principal, and French Immersion Teachers. Monthly meetings were held in the fall to look at enrolment in the program; the current delivery model; student achievement results; staffing issues; procedures on enrolment into the program; declining enrolment; and the impact of primary class size caps on the French Immersion Program. A report outlining recommendations will be presented to the Board of Trustees on January 12. Trustee support will be sought before obtaining community consultation. Timelines for implementation of any approved changes would be September 2010.

### "Growing Success K to 12" Initiative

- The Ministry initiative "Growing Success K to 12" includes changes to the assessment and evaluation process, especially for elementary students. Consultation took place on what the grading process should be. What has been decided is that the six learning skills and work habits will be the same for Gr. 1 to 12 and that learning skills will have more emphasis on report cards. Students in Grades 1 to 6 would receive letter grades (A B C D) and students in Grades 7 to 12 would receive numerical or percentage marks on their report cards. Elementary students would receive two report cards instead of three and secondary students would still receive two report cards. The first reporting period would be from September to the end of January and would be received in February. The second reporting period would be from February to the end of June. A mid-fall progress report would go home in November that would comment on the learning skills section. It is expected to be in the form of a check list and comments section. The final Growing Success Document is expected this winter for implementation in September. Staff in-service will be held on the new reporting process. **PIC requested that Superintendent Badder attend a June or early fall meeting to provide them with an in-service on the new reporting process.**
- Tracey Machan thanked Superintendent Badder for the informative updates.

## Ministry Consultation on Province Wide Guidelines for School Board Policies Related to Fundraising and Fees for Learning Materials and Activities

Break-away group discussion took place to provide input on the following questions:

- How should the school community be informed of fundraising activities?
- How can school fundraising activities benefit schools and/or communities?
- What criteria should boards and schools use when determining what activities, programs or courses are eligible for fees?
- What practices are in place to support fairness and access to student activities in a way that is sensitive to the needs of all students?

A summary of the feedback provided will be submitted to the Ministry of Education.

### Other Business/Future Agenda Items

- Information was distributed on the implementation of Bill 157 – “Keeping Our Kids Safe at School”. The legislation will come into effect on February 1, 2010. **PIC members were asked to review the information for discussion at a future meeting.** Under the new legislation the parents of victims will have the right to know the nature of the disciplinary action taken against the aggressors; however the name or other personal information of the students involved will not be shared.
- Charlene Parks received a letter from a John N. Given parent expressing concerns regarding dismissal policies. The letter questioned how Board staff can ensure that only identified parents or care givers can pick up a student and that proof of identification is not required. Questions were raised as to how we ensure student safety and where does the school’s responsibility stop. Superintendent Badder explained that there is no set Board policy re dismissal and that each school has a different system for end of the day dismissal based on whether students walk or are bused to school. It was stressed that the responsibility rests with the parent to ensure that teachers are aware of any custodial issues and who can pick up their child. Visitors are required to check in at the office and sign a log book upon entering the school. It was noted that the procedures vary for JK/SK students than that of Gr. 7 and 8 students. Staff would contact the home if someone showed up to pick up a student that is to take the bus or if they were unfamiliar. Communication between home and school is key. Parents need to talk to their children about safety. Schools reinforce this through newsletters. In many schools buddy systems are in place where an older student walks another student home. Typically JK/K teachers are aware of who students go home with. The school and the parent have a responsibility to know dismissal routines and parents need to notify the school if there is a change to the routine. The question was raised whether parents pick up their children at the front office or whether they are permitted to go to the classroom. Having more people in the hallways is more challenging. Parents are supposed to sign in at office or pick up their child at a designated area. In extreme situations the occasional teacher would be made aware of any custodial issues. It was suggested that perhaps the issue of safety and dismissal could be put on school council agendas as a reminder for staff and parents to review safety practices.

### Next Meeting

- The next meeting will be held on February 8, 2010 via video conference from the Sarnia and Chatham Education Centres beginning at 6:30 p.m.

Adjournment: 8:28 p.m.

Sue Fraser, Recording Secretary